

Labor and Public Employees Committee,

My name is Thomas O'Sullivan. I serve as the Vice Chair of Connecticut Citizens for Progress, and I am a resident of Madison, Connecticut. I am submitting testimony today to express my support for H.B. 6859 An Act Concerning Predictable Scheduling, S.B. 1178 An Act Expanding Connecticut Paid Sick Days and S.B. 1180 An Act Concerning Rideshare and Delivery Driver Minimum Standards.

Every worker in Connecticut should have access to a stable job that provides opportunity and treats them with respect. Tens of thousands of workers in Connecticut begin their work week without knowing their schedule. They work "on-call", with unpredictable, fluctuating workweeks that they can't control. They are denied full-time hours, so they don't receive benefits - and they cannot seek another job, as they don't have a fixed schedule. The effects are devastating for working families - and this impact has been even more devastating for low-wage workers, especially people of color.

H.B. 6859 gives workers the stability they need, ensuring that more than 140,000 retail, food service, long-term care, and hotel workers have more predictable schedules and paychecks. The bill will give part-time employees the opportunity to work more hours, requiring employers to offer extra shifts to current workers before hiring additional staff. More than anything, it will ensure that employers treat their employees with respect, setting their schedules in advance and providing compensation for any late changes. In addition, predictable scheduling will also help businesses. Companies and stores that have adopted predictable scheduling have less employee turnover, better attendance, and higher productivity.

Additionally, I support S.B. 1178 to expand access to paid sick days to all workers in Connecticut. It would increase the total hours of paid sick time we can use to 80 hours a year, and won't make us choose between earning a paycheck and staying home to care for ourselves or our loved ones. Also, it broadens the definition of family structures and relationships to take care of our "chosen families". This is especially important based on our recent experience with a global pandemic that affected those closest to us. The bill includes protection against future pandemics by allowing us to use paid sick days when our workplace and children's school is closed by public officials for public health emergencies.

Lastly, S.B. 1180 - An Act Concerning Rideshare and Delivery Driver Minimum Standards, would help protect workers in three ways. First, it provides certain basic standards for pay, including a mandatory 85% of every fare for drivers. Second, it provides for transparency with drivers and state government, allowing drivers to see what customers are paying and tipping, while also allowing the state to track rideshare and delivery usage data. Third, it provides for reciprocity between states. Under this bill, drivers from neighboring states will not be eligible to pick up fares in Connecticut until drivers from Connecticut are eligible to pick up fares in their states. Rideshare and delivery drivers work long hours for low pay, shouldering responsibilities for fuel and vehicle maintenance without seeing their fair share of profits. This bill will help to level the playing field.

I strongly urge you to support H.B. 6859, S.B. 1178 & S.B.1180 to improve workers rights in the State of Connecticut.

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